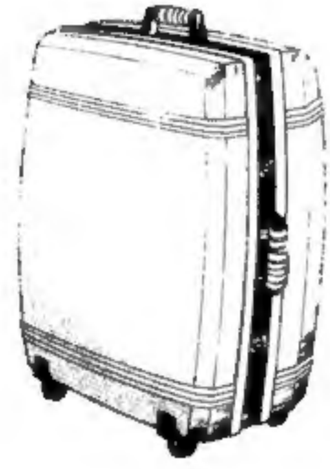
KARAKURI CIRCUS

KAZUHIRO FUJITA

1



KARAKURI CIRCUS VOLUME 1

SUMMARY :

ACT 1: MASARU - CHAPTER 01 "THE CURTAIN RISES"

ACT 1: MASARU - CHAPTER 02 "SHIROGANE"

ACT1 : MASARU - CHAPTER 03 "THE FIGHT AGAINST POLICHINELLE"

ACT1 : MASARU - CHAPTER 04 "NARUMI IS EMBARRASSED"

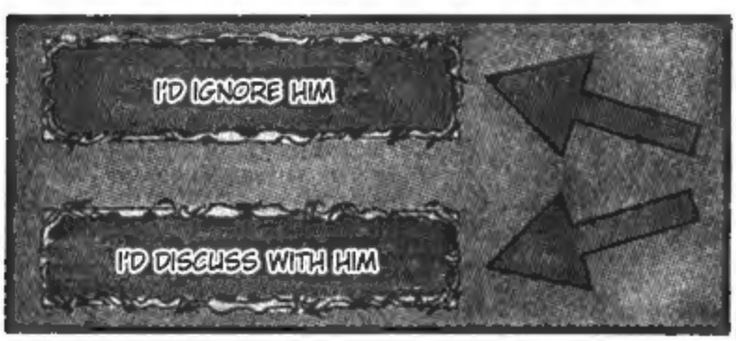
ACT1 : MASARU - CHAPTER 05 "AT NARUMI'S HOUSE"

ACT1 : MASARU - CHAPTER 06 "PROMISE"

ACT1 : MASARU - CHAPTER 07 "THE KIDNAPPERS"

ACT1 : MASARU - CHAPTER 08 "FLIGHT"

ACT1 : MASARU - CHAPTER 01
"THE CURTAIN RISES"



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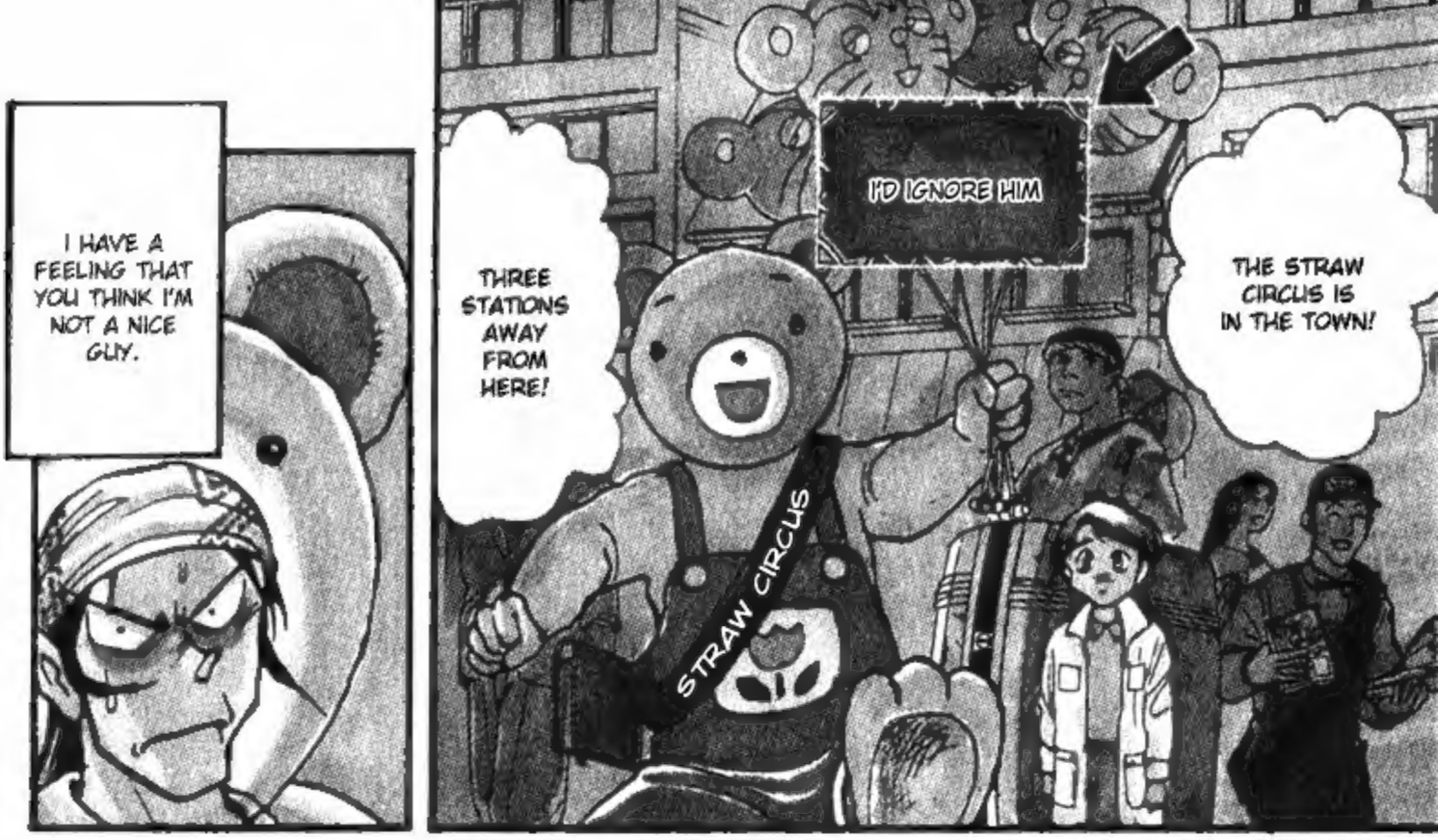
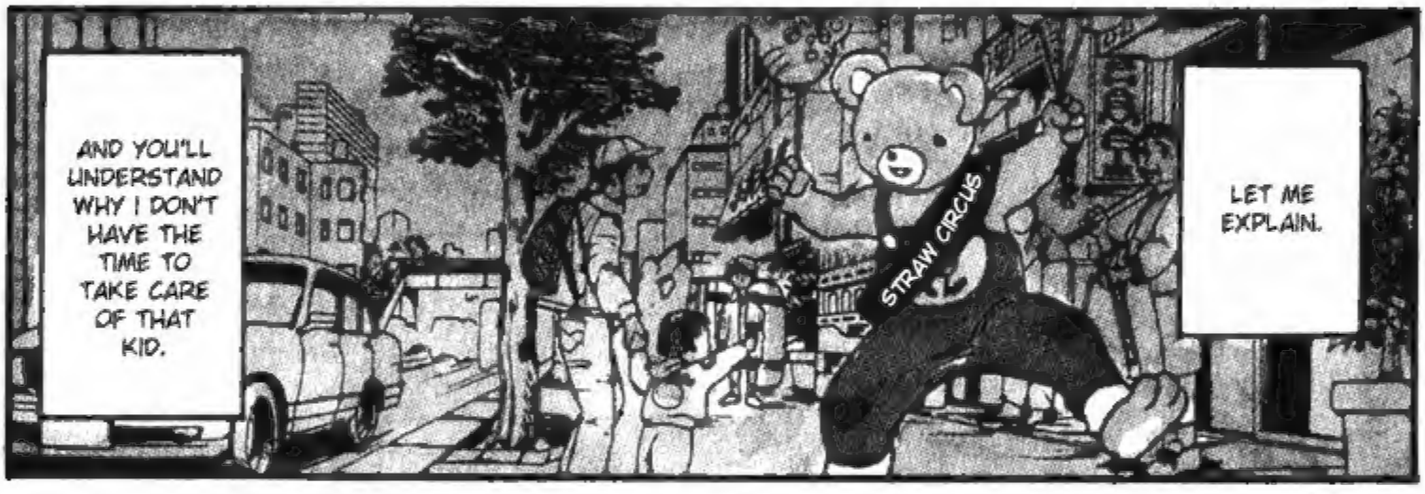
ACT1 : MASARU

CHAPTER 01

"THE CURTAIN RISES"

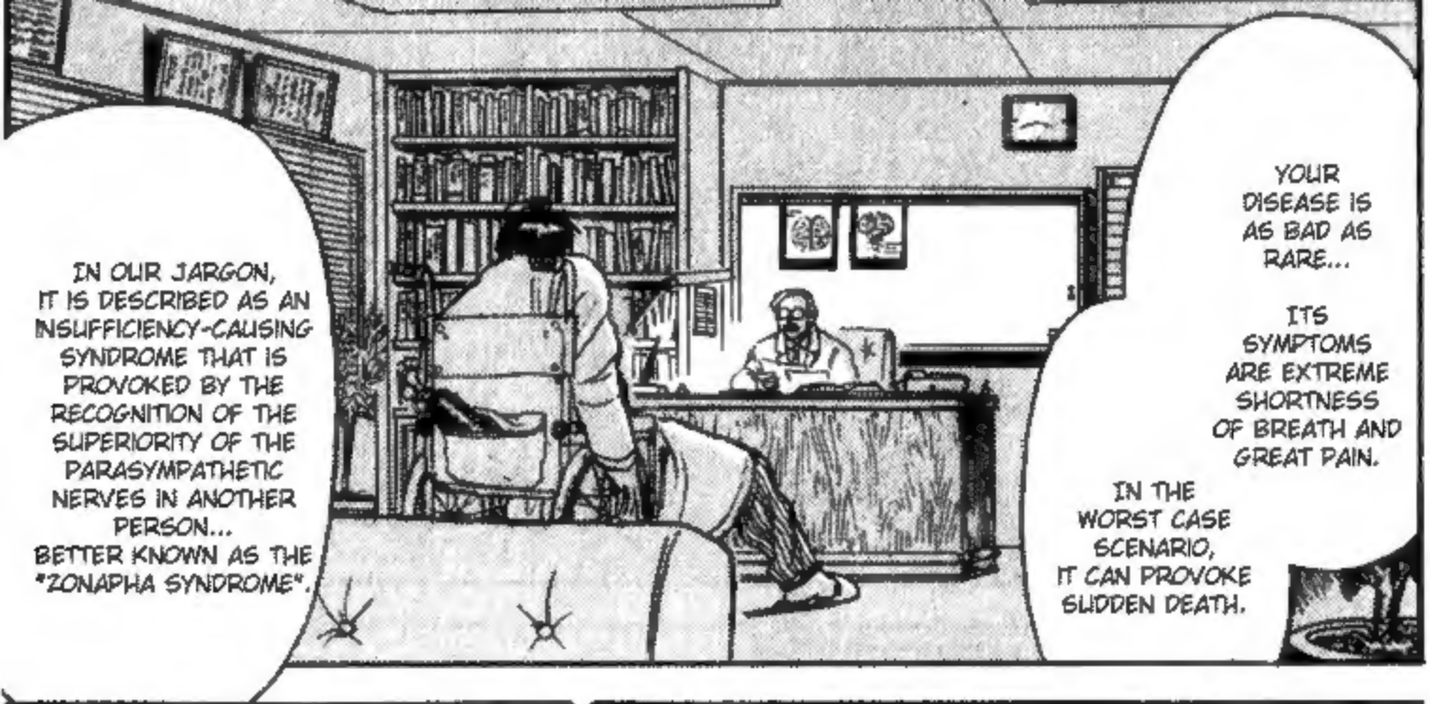

I HAVE A FEELING THAT YOU THINK I'M NOT A NICE GUY.
THREE STATIONS AWAY FROM HERE!
I'D IGNORE HIM
THE STRAW CIRCUS IS IN THE TOWN!
STRAW CIRCUS


AND YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHY I DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO TAKE CARE OF THAT KID.
STRAW CIRCUS
LET ME EXPLAIN.

AND I LIVED IN CHINA FOR A TIME ...
MY FATHER WORKED IN THE IMPORT AND EXPORT INDUSTRY

BUT ...
HA! HA! WHO'S NEXT?
I REALLY WAS IN MY ELEMENT
DURING MY STAY, I BECAME CRAZY ABOUT KUNG-FU
DAN
DAN
BREATH ... ANYMORE ...
I... I CAN'T ...
HHH
...I BECAME ILL ALL OF A SUDDEN
BLANG
BOOM
HHH
BAM DOOM
MISTER KATO, I HAVE BAD NEWS ...
YOU KNOW WHAT THAT DISEASE WAS?

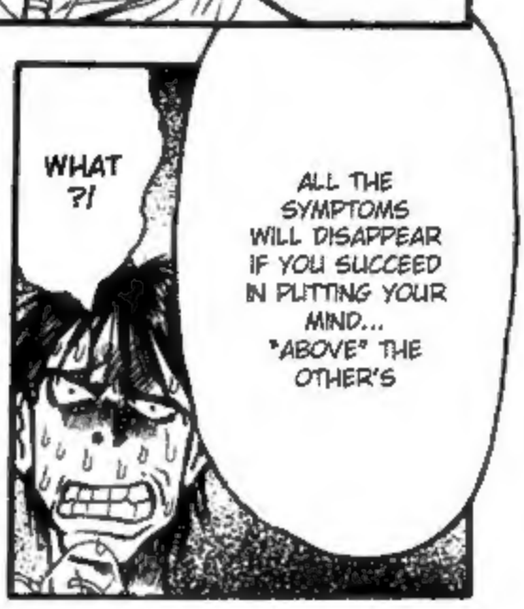
KARAKURI
CIRCUS


IN OUR JARGON, IT IS DESCRIBED AS AN INSUFFICIENCY-CAUSING SYNDROME THAT IS PROVOKED BY THE RECOGNITION OF THE SUPERIORITY OF THE PARASYMPATHETIC NERVES IN ANOTHER PERSON... BETTER KNOWN AS THE "ZONAPHA SYNDROME".
YOUR DISEASE IS AS BAD AS RARE...
ITS SYMPTOMS ARE EXTREME SHORTNESS OF BREATH AND GREAT PAIN.
IN THE WORST CASE SCENARIO, IT CAN PROVOKE SUDDEN DEATH.

BUT ...
UNFORTUNATELY, THERE'S NO TREATMENT FOR THE DISEASE.

DO ...
TO CURE IT?
WHAT ... CAN I...

...THAT YOU MUST MAKE THE OTHERS LAUGH!


WHAT ?!
ALL THE SYMPTOMS WILL DISAPPEAR IF YOU SUCCEED IN PUTTING YOUR MIND... "ABOVE" THE OTHER'S

SO, IN SHORT, IT MEANS ...

BASICALLY, IF I DON'T MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH, I'LL DIE !
SO? DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT KIND OF SITUATION I'M IN ?
I TRY TO MAKE PASSERS-BY LAUGH...
CIRCUS
THAT'S WHY I'M DRESSED UP LIKE A BEAR AND DELIVERING LEAFLETS FOR A CIRCUS ...
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
EVEN IF I'M NOT IN A GOOD MOOD FOR THAT...
COME ON, LAUGH !!
...AND TO SAVE MY LIFE AS WELL!
I CAN'T BREATHE ANYMORE !!
I BEG YOU!
FOR SEVERAL DAYS, NO ONE HAS LAUGHED WHEN THEY SAW ME ...

HA! HA! ...
... M?
CIRCUS
I'M SAFE!
BYE BYE ...
TAN

I THINK HE DESERVES IT
I'D DISCUSS WITH HIM
DAK
HEY! YOU STILL HAVE TO DELIVER THESE LEAFLETS !
...
...
CIRCUS
WHAT THE ...
BOOKSHOP
HEY ...
DISH OF THE DAY
OPEN
NO... HELP!
SAH
CIRCUS
AAHH !
GRAAHH

...
...
WHAT SHOULD DO ? HE MIGHT JUST BE A KID TRYING TO RUN AWAY!
THEY'RE SURROUNDING THE KID TO HIDE HIM
A KIDNAPPING ?!
PEOPLE AROUND HIM DON'T REAL ZE T!
WAIT!
SBAAAF
WE..., NEVER MIND .. IF I'M WRONG, I'L APOLOG ZE LATER
YES
... KIDNAPPING YOU?
ARE THEY ...
BRI ON

I'LL KICK YOUR ASS!!
BASTARDS
SBAM
CLAC
CLAC
CLAC
OOH, NOOO! I BROKE HIS NECK!
GIII
OOOO
...owww !!
WHAT ?!

GO
SLAM
... WHAT STRENGTH !!
THAT'S ENOUGH !!
CRUNCH
HE DISLOCATED HIS SHOULDER BY HIMSELF ?!
NO IT SEEMS THAT IT STAYED IN PLACE
OH

BLA BLA BLA
BLA BLA BLA
THE BEAR IS FIGHTING WITH THOSE WEIRD GUYS !!
...WHO ARE THESE MEN IN BLACK?
...BUT
ARE THEY MAKING A SHOW ?
WE HAVE TO RUN AWAY !
MISTER
WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO DISCUSS !
... THE BEAR IS LEAVING
WE RUN AWAY
WE STAY
WHAT TO DO ?
HEY! MY SUIT-CASE !

CLIC
THE BEAR WAS HANDING OUT LEAFLETS FOR A CIRCUS WHICH JUST SETTLED NEARBY!
OF COURSE !
WAS IT REALLY A SHOW ?
THEY'RE LEAVING ...
TAN TAN TAN
MIKADO JOSUI STATION
TICKETS
I HIT THEM WITH ALL MY STRENGTH BUT IT WAS USELESS! IN ADDITION TO THAT, THEY MOVED THEIR ARMS AND HEADS WEIRDLY !!
WHO THE HELL WERE THOSE GUYS ?!!
BLO
SHA

HEY KID! TELL ME WHAT'S THE MEANING BEHIND ALL THIS !
TELL ME!! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MADE ME A PART OF THIS THING!
GOOOHH
YES... EXCUSE ME...
HMM.. YOU HAVE A FACE THAT'S MORE STRANGE-LOOKING THAN I THOUGHT ...
IF I HAVEN'T MET YOU A SHORT WHILE AGO ...
QUICK ...
LAUGH ...
WHAT ?
IT'S MY FAULT ..
OKAY!
NO! I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING!
IM' TELLING YOU TO LAUGH! ... OR I'LL KICK YOUR ASS!! "HA HA HA!" DO YOU UNDERSTAND?!
? ?
FOOm

PLEASED TO MEET YOU. MY NAME IS MASARU SAIGA.
I'M NARUMI KATO ... I'M 18
... AND YOU ?
SO?
ATAN
?
LAUGH!
I'M SORRY ...
"PLEASED TO MEET YOU" ?!
WHERE THE HELL DO YOU COME FROM?
... WHEN MY FATHER DIED
... ... THOSE PEOPLE STARTED TO APPEAR ...
... SAIGA ?
THE BIG ELEC-TRONIC FIRM?
SAIGA
WATCH-MAK NG / TELECOMMUNICATIONS / ELECTRONIC- / META...
BUILDING F RM / INTERNATIONNA TRADE / BANK AND INSURANCE...
PETROCHEMICA INDUSTRY / OFFICE EQUIPMENT...
... THAT IS "SAIGA"
DO YOU KNOW THE SAIGA ENTERPRISE ?
ER...
YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR FATHER ANYMORE ...

MY FATHER ..
.. WAS THE PRESIDENT OF SAIGA.
IS IT FAMOUS ?
THEY HAD A VERY BIG BUILDING IN HONG-KONG ... ON TV, WE SAW COMMERCIALS FOR THEIR PRODUCTS EVERY DAY
HOW DID YOUR FATHER DIE?
HE HAD A CAR ACCIDENT, ON A FREE-WAY..
IT WAS TALKED ABOUT IN THE NEWS ..
AND NOW, WEIRD GUYS WANT TO KIDNAP HIS SON ...
WHAT WAS IT ?
HE LOST CONTROL OF HIS CAR.. IT SEEMS THAT HE HAD RUN ON SOMETHING ..
REALLY ?

SOME SORT OF .. BIG PUPPET

I REMEMBERED SOMETHING THAT MY GRAND-FATHER, WHO PASSED AWAY HAD SAID
AND AT THAT MOMENT
... ... ?!

WAH! THERE ARE A LOT OF DOLLS AND PUPPETS HERE!
.. ARE YOU SURPRISED, MASARU?
BUT, YOU KNOW . . ALL THE MEN OF THE SAIGA FAMILY HAVE A ROOM LIKE THIS ONE
REALLY?! MY FATHER TOO?!
OF COURSE! DO YOU REMEMBER THE BASEMENT IN YOUR HOUSE AT TOKYO? IT'S WHERE YOUR FATHER KEPT ALL HIS PUPPETS.
I NEVER REALLY KNEW WHY, BUT ALL THE MEN OF OUR FAMILY WERE INTERESTED IN MECHANICAL PUPPETS...
WAH!
IN PUPPETS WHICH MOVE, LIKE THEY WERE ALIVE . .
YOU KNOW, THEIR INTERNAL MECHANISM IS VERY COMPLEX SOMETIMES.
WE CALL THEM "AUTOMAT"
I HEARD THAT A LONG TIME AGO, A FAMILY WAS SPECIALIZED IN THE MAKING OF THAT KIND OF PUPPETS
IT'S TRUE... AS FAR AS OUR FAMILY IS CONCERNED, WE ONLY LIKE MACHINES.
THAT'S WHY THE SAIGA GROUP IS THE WORLD LEADER IN THE DOMAIN OF TOOLS AND ACCURACY MACHINES
... AND OUR FORTUNE IS ALMOST 18 BILLION YEN ...

MASARU, LISTEN CAREFULLY.
IF YOUR FATHER DIES BEFORE YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH
YES... IT'S TRUE ...
YOU KNOW, GRANDFATHER ... ONE DAY, MY FATHER SAID...
...THAT ALL WILL BELONG TO ME
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
...DESPITE THE PROBLEMS YOU MAY HAVE TO FACE.
YOUR FATHER HAS ALWAYS WISHED FOR THAT...
"SHIROGANE" ...
... IS GOING TO TAKE CARE OF YOU.
RUN AWAY, AND TAKE THIS SUITCASE WITH YOU.
AND STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN ...

I DON'T KNOW, BUT MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME ...
AND, WHO'S "SHIROGANE" ?
JAJAC
JAJAC
YES!
YOU REALLY DID WHAT YOUR GRANDFATHER TOLD YOU!
THAT'S WHY YOU WANTED ME TO TAKE YOU TO THE CIRCUS I WAS ADVERTISING FOR?
... THAT HE'LL ALWAYS BE IN A CIRCUS NEAR ME.
THOSE GUYS WE SAW... THEY WANTED TO KIDNAP YOU. THEY SHOULD BE UNDER THE ORDER OF SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO TAKE YOUR INHERITANCE AWAY. .
EVEN IF THAT IDEA DOESN'T DELIGHT ME.
BUT ...
WE SHOULD CALL THE COPS
YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT IT MAY BE SOMEONE FROM MY FAMILY ?!!
WHAT ?!
A PERSON WHO WOULD GET THAT MONEY IF YOU DIE ..

CLIC
I CAN'T !
LALLLLLLLGH!
RRR ...
OH, NO!
THEY CAME IN THE TRAIN!
... LOOK OVER THERE !
CLIC
I'LL CALL THE COPS AFTER I KICK YOUR ASS !!
NO NEED TO BEAT AROUND THE BUS! I KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON!

HE'S NOT SAYING ANYTHING
I WONDER IF HE HEARD ME...

YOU'RE REALLY BRAVE TO CHALLENGE ME WITHOUT A WEAPON ...
WAIT!

SPAAH

WHAT STRENGTH!!
IT' INHUMAN !!

BLOOM
BAAM
HEY!
!!
... WHAT ?!
AH!
... TO GO THAT FAR ?!
TRAIN
THEY'RE READY
IT'S ONE OF THEM'
WAAA

CRAC
RR
BAAAA
KILL
CRAC
PL
BLOM
THEY
THEY'RE
PUPPETS
!?!
"WHAT
DOES
MEAN
PECES

BANG
SCREECHING
MASARU, HANG ON!
AAAAHH!
DAAH

BLANG BOM
BLA
AM
GH
GHH...
I MUST PROTECT THAT KID!
IT WON'T BE EASY ...
PAF
CIRCUS
SHA
DROP IT... YOU'RE NOT RESPONSIBLE !
EXCUSE ME... I'M REALLY SORRY ...
BOOM
BOOM
I HAVE TO TAKE HIM OUT OF DANGER!
BOOM
GH
Straw Circus
WELCOME

I'M SORRY ...
SORRY ...
CLIC
CLIC
.. THAT I THOUGHT YOU'D BE ABLE TO HELP ME ...
IT WAS BECAUSE YOU'RE SO TALL... SO STRONG ...
STRAWCIRCUS
WELL ...
IF I MUST DIE...
... I MUST DIE ALONE !!

DA-AA-AH
YOU MUST NEVER GIVE UP !!
YOU DID NOTHING !
YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO REPROACH !

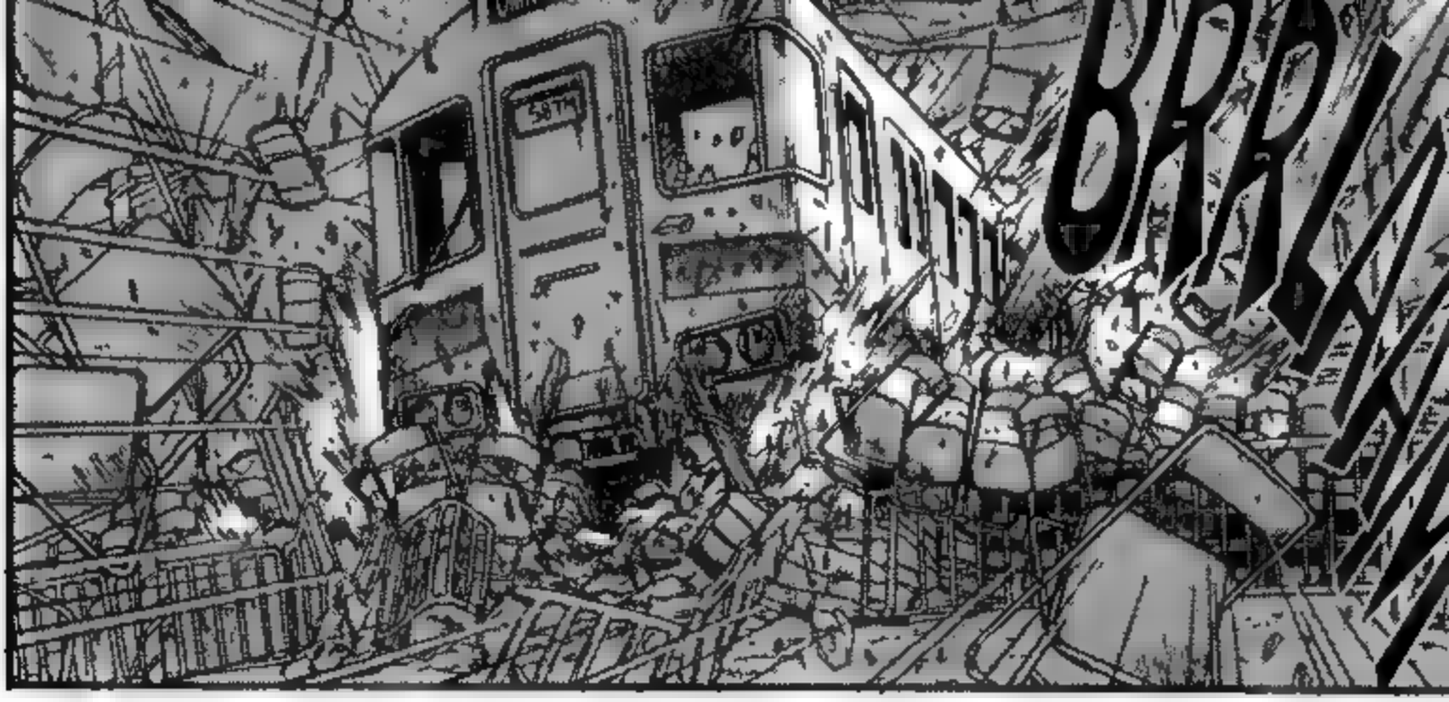
IZ-AH!

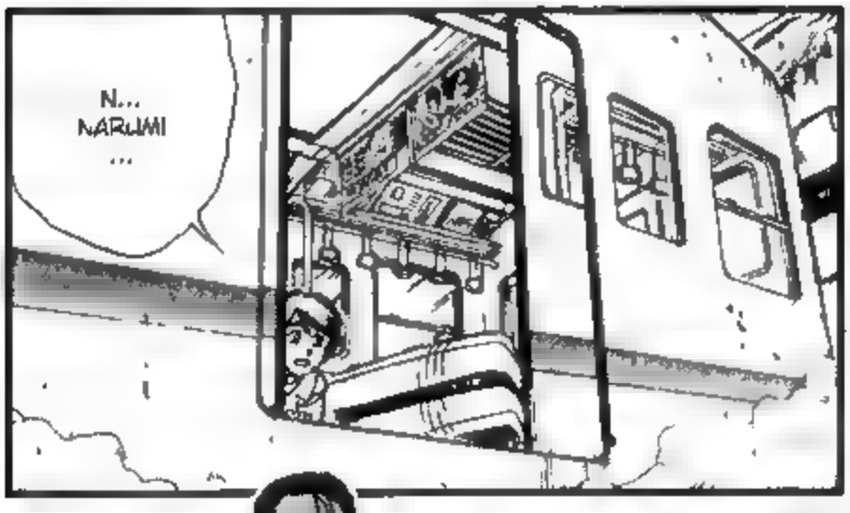
IF YOU'RE REALLY ANGRY, INSULT THOSE WHO ANNOY YOU!
IF YOU DON'T FEEL WELL, SHOUT "HELP ME!"

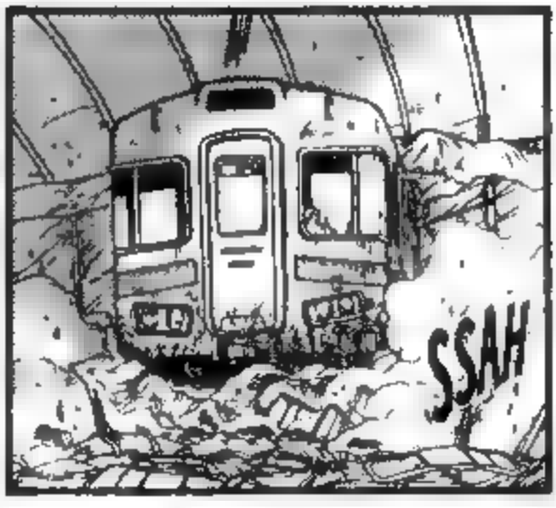
YOU MUST ...
KEEP A SMILING FACE!

EVEN IF YOU'VE FOUGHT UNTIL THE END AND IT DOESN'T WORK...
BUT... NEVER GIVE UP! ... IT'S GOOD FOR NOTHING!

SLAM
GOH
YAAHH !!
GHHH ...
BLAM
NARUMI!!!!!
TRAIN
SHOCK
DAAH


BRRR


N...
NARUMI
...


SSAH

CLAC
CLIC

WHERE ARE YOU ?!

AH!!
CLIC

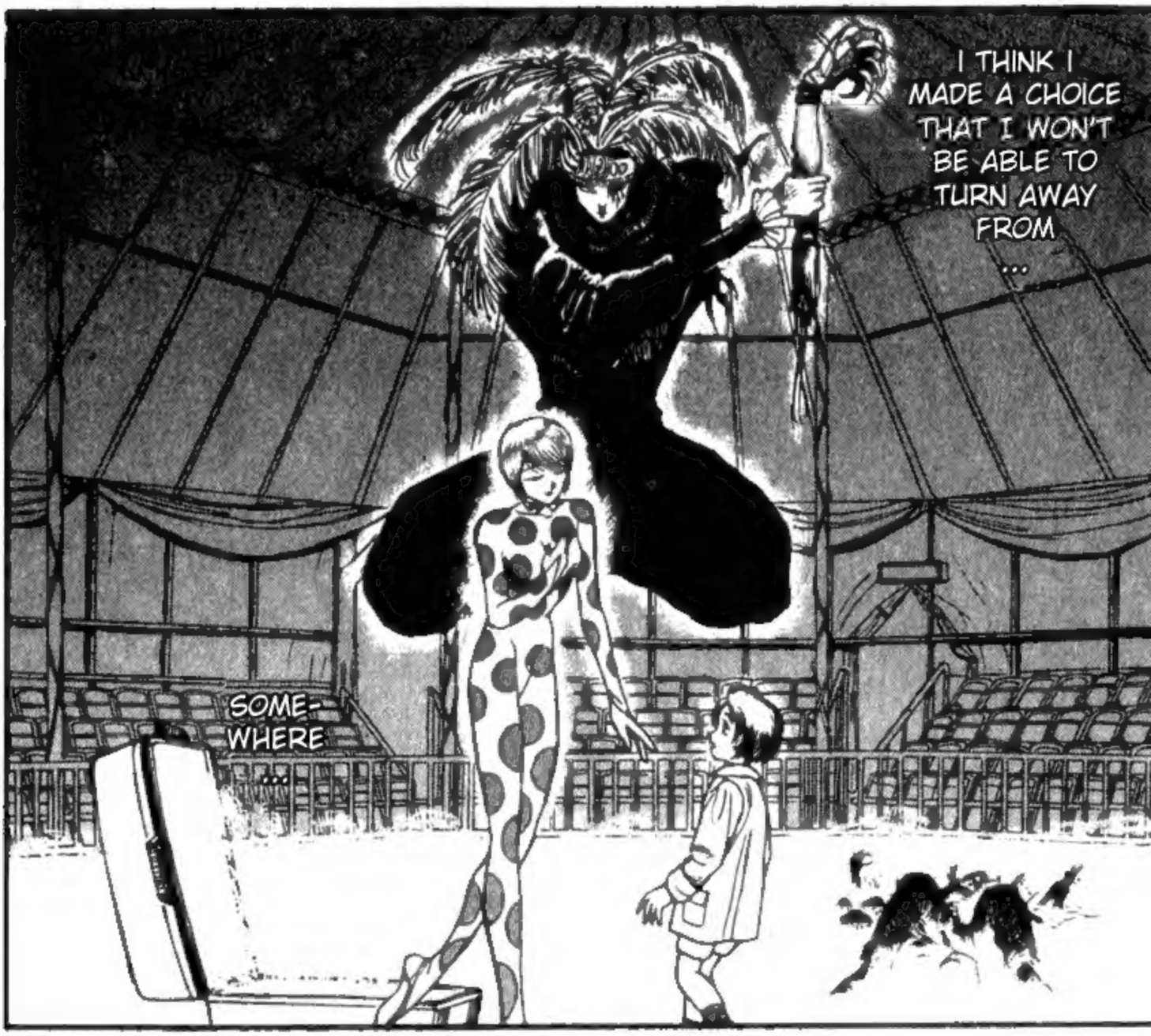
KIIIH
NOOOOOO !!!
AAH!
I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF HE EXISTS . .
I DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS. .
SHIROGANEEE !!
SHI... SHIROGANE ...
SHIROGANEEE!
MUST NEVER GIVE UP !
BUT . .
SKII
GIVE UP!
DON'T EVER .

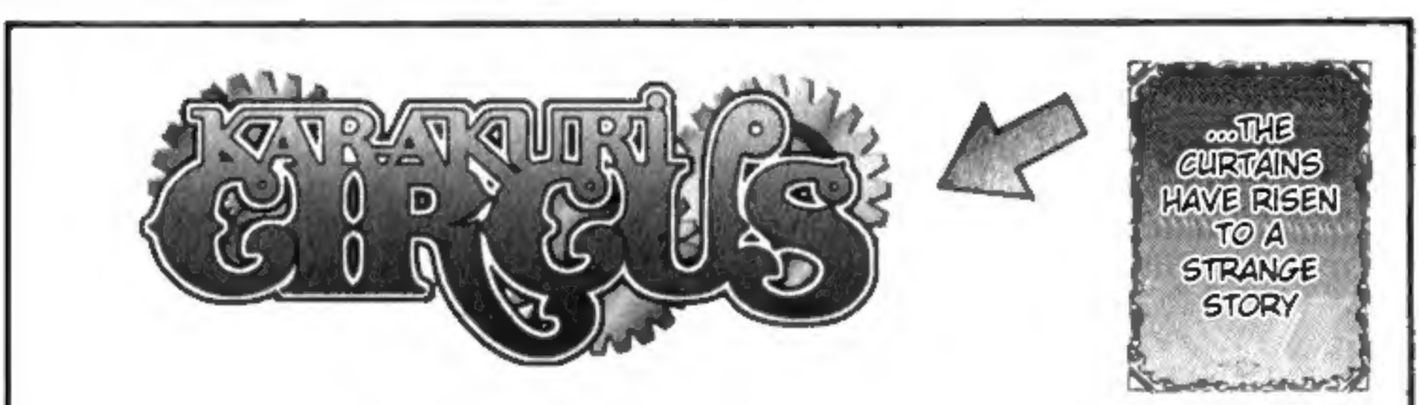
SHIRO
...
... GANE ?
FLASH
WHAT ?!

SBOOM
GAN
PLEASE... STAY BACK MISTER MASARU!
GAMP

THE CHICAGO

SHE IS ... SHIROGANE ?!
WHAT!


I THINK I MADE A CHOICE THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO TURN AWAY FROM ...
SOME-WHERE ...


KARAKURI CIRCUS
...THE CURTAINS HAVE RISEN TO A STRANGE STORY